

Message Text

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15

ACTION ACDA-19

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 IO-14 ISO-00 AEC-11 AF-10 ARA-16 CIAE-00

DODE-00 EUR-25 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NASA-04 NEA-14

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SCI-06 SS-20 USIA-15 SAJ-01 DRC-01 /212 W

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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3879

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 5293

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, AS

SUBJECT: AUSTRALIAN INTEREST IN CCD MEMBERSHIP

REF: A) GENEVA 5168

B) CANBERRA 5206

1. SUMMARY: PURSUIT OF AUSTRALIAN CANDIDACY FOR CCD SEEMS CLEARLY NOT RPT NOT IN OUR INTEREST AND UNLIKELY OF ATTAINMENT ANYWAY. SUGGEST BEST COURSE OF ACTION IN CIRCUMSTANCES MAY BE FOR US NOW TO INFORM GOA, POLITELY BUT FIRMLY, THAT WE CANNOT SUPPORT CANDIDACY AND DO NOT BELIEVE IT CAN BE ARRANGED.FOR SEVERAL REASONS WE ANTICIPATE GOA WILL PROBABLY ACCEPT THIS FRANK POSITION AND NOT BE UNDULY PUT OUT. END SUMMARY

2. REFTELS AND PREVIOUS MESSAGES MAKE CLEAR THERE ARE MAJOR OBSTACLES TO AUSTRALIAN MEMBERSHIP IN CCD, AT LEAST DURING CURRENT SESSION. WE UNDERSTAND THAT AUSTRALIAN ACCESSION, IF PRESSED BY U.S. , MIGHT RESULT IN DAMAGING STRUGGLE THAT COULD WEAKEN CCD OR EXPAND IT ON UNDERSIRABLE SCALE AND IN UNDESIRABLE DIRECTION.

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3. AS DEPT AWARE, SINCE ACCESSION OF LABOR GOVERNMENT TO POWER IN AUSTRALIA IN DECEMBER , 1972, THEME LABOR HAS REGULARLY DWELT ON IS DESIRE TO ASSERT MORE INDEPENDENCE FROM U.S. WE HAVE EXPRESSED OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THIS VIEW, BOTH PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY, THOUGH IT HAS AT TIMES OCCASIONED PROBLEMS FOR US OF VARYING IMPORTANCE. LOGICAL COROLLARY OF AUSTRALIAN DESIRE FOR MORE INDEPENDENCE FROM U.S. IS THAT U.S. MAY FIND IT NECESSARY AT TIMES TO ADOPT VIEW DIFFERENT FROM AUSTRALIA ON SPECIFIC ISSUES.

4. IT SEEMS CLEAR FROM REF A THAT SOVIET DO NOT WANT TO PURSUE ISSUE OF AUSTRALIAN MEMBERSHIP IN CCD AT THIS SESSION, AND PREVIOUS REPORTING HAS MADE IT CLEAR THAT PRC AND OUR NATO ALLIES ARE ALSO UNENTHUSIASTIC FOR DIFFERENT REASONS. PERHAPS BEST COURSE , UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS , IS TO MAKE VIRTUE OF NECESSITY AND INFORM AUSTRALIANS QUITE FRANKLY, EITHER IN WASHINGTON OR IN CANBERRA, THAT OUR EXPLORATION OF MATTER INDICATES THAT AUSTRALIAN MEMBERSHIP OF CCD CANNOT BE REALIZED AT THIS SESSION, THOUGH NOTE OF AUSTRALIAN INTEREST IN MEMBERSHIP CAN PROBABLY BE MADE IN CCD REPORT, AS SOVIET DEPUTY IN GENEVA SUGGESTED (REF A)

5. THIS OUTCOME MAY BE PALATABLE TO GOA FOR NUMBER OF REASONS. AUSTRALIA IS PUSHING CANDIDACY OF ITS FOREIGN MINISTER, SENATOR WILLESEE, FOR PRESIDENT OF GA IN 1975. AUSTRALIA MAY WELL DECIDE TO AVOID RECRIMINATIONS OVER CCD ISSUE WHICH COULD HAVE HARMFUL EFFECT ON PROSPECTS FOR WILLESEE. ANOTHER PROBLEM IS PERSONNEL. WITH ABOUT 450 FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS MANNING SOME 75 EMBASSIES, HIGH COMMISSIONS, AND CONSULATES ABROAD, AS WELL AS DEPT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN CANBERRA, AUSTRALIAN DFA IS AT FULL STRETCH WITHOUT ADDING NEW RESPONSIBILITIES. CCD MEMBERSHIP WOULD INVOLVE CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF ACTIVITY, IF AUSTRALIA IS TO PLAY SIGNIFICANT ROLE. DEPT FOREIGN AFFAIRS INITIALLY OPPOSED AUSTRALIAN

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CANDIDACY BECAUSE OF PERSONNEL SHORTAGE BUT WAS EVIDENTLY OVERRULED BY FOREIGN MINISTER AND, MOST PROBABLY, PRIME MINISTER.

6. INFORMING AUSTRALIANS POLITELY BUT FIRMLY THAT WE CAN NOT RPT NOT SUPPORT AUSTRALIAN MEMBERSHIP AND DO NOT RPT NOT CONSIDER IT CAN BE ARRANGED IN THIS SESSION SEEMS TO US ADVISABLE, THOUGH WE ARE NOT,

OF COURSE, INFORMED OF INTRICACIES OF GENEVA SITUATION.
AUSTRALIANS, FOR REASONS NOTED ABOVE, WILL PROBABLY
NOT MAKE HEAVY WEATHER OVER IT. IF AUSTRALIANS
COMPLAIN THAT U.S., AS THEIR MAJOR ALLY, HAS LET
THEM DOWN, WE CAN NOTE THAT, AS AUSTRALIA FINDS IT
OCCASIONALLY NECESSARY TO DIFFER WITH U.S.,SO WE
FIND IT OCCASIONALLY NECESSARY TO DIFFER WITH
AUSTRALIA, PARTICULARLY WHERE OUR EXPLORATION OF
ISSUE INDICATES NO PROSPECT OF SUCCESSFUL AUSTRALIAN
CANDIDACY. IF DEPARTMENT AGREES, IT WOULD BE BEST
TO GO OVER ISSUE WITH AUSTRALIANS ON EARLY OCCASION
SO AS TO LIMIT ANY MISUNDERSTANDING OR ILL WILL.
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